

Gila National Forest Plan Revision

DRAFT Wild and Scenic Rivers Eligibility Study Process



DRAFT Process Paper, October 2018

Cover: West Fork of the Gila River near Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument, Gila National Forest

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Introduction

The Gila National Forest is in the process of revising a land and resource management plan that has been in place since 1986. The [2012 Planning Rule \(36 CFR 219\)](#) provides the framework to create local land management plans for national forests and grasslands across the nation. The 2012 Planning Rule is intended to create a plan that guides resource management on the Gila National Forest within the context of the broader landscape. It takes an integrated and holistic approach that recognizes the interdependence of ecological, social, cultural and economic systems. Collaboration with stakeholders and process transparency are key components of this approach.

This document outlines a process required by the 2012 Planning Rule that each national forest revising their Forest Plan must include a process for identifying and determining the eligibility of potential additions to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (National System) on National Forest System (NFS) lands.

The Forest Service Planning Handbook ([FSH 1909.12 Chapter 80](#)) provides guidance and direction for a three-step process for evaluating eligibility and ultimately suitability as Wild and Scenic Rivers:

1. **Determining Eligibility:** a study to identify if rivers are free-flowing and possess outstandingly remarkable values, giving them status as Eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers
2. **Assigning Eligible Rivers potential classifications as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational** based on the condition of the river and the level of development level of adjacent lands
3. **Determining Suitability:** a study to ascertain if eligible rivers should be recommended to congress for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System

Although the third step may be accomplished at any time, including during plan revision, it is not a requirement to do so during that process. The Gila NF does not intend to complete the suitability step during its plan revision process unless it should receive direction from Congress to do so. Therefore, this process paper covers only the first two steps of the process, determining eligibility as a Wild and Scenic River, and assignment of potential classifications as Wild, Scenic, or Recreational.

An Interdisciplinary Team (ID Team) has been established to initiate a transparent Wild and Scenic Rivers Eligibility Study process that integrates and is informed by stakeholder and public input. These findings and potential classifications will be included as part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Revised Forest Plan.

To those familiar with Plan Revision, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Eligibility Study may be similar to another process also being undertaken of identifying and evaluating lands that may be suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System, and determine whether to recommend any of those evaluated lands to Congress for wilderness designation.

However, it should be noted that while similar processes, there are key differences between these two. Although both occur during Forest Plan Revision, only the eligibility and initial classification steps of the Wild and Scenic Rivers process are to be completed during the plan revision, while all four steps, inventory, evaluation, analysis, and recommendation must be completed for the determination whether to recommend any lands to Congress for wilderness designation. It is required that evaluated areas carried forward as recommended wilderness be included in one or more alternatives for the EIS, however there is no requirement to include eligible rivers in alternatives. This is because the suitability study, the recommendation step of the process, will be completed later, outside of the plan revision process.

Steps in the Gila NF Wild and Scenic Rivers Eligibility Study Process:

1) Inventory of Rivers Required to be Included in the Current Eligibility Study:

- **Previously Studied Rivers with Changed Conditions**
- **Rivers Not Previously Studied for Eligibility**

Because a systematic inventory of eligible rivers was completed in 2002, the extent of the eligibility study process during the Gila National Forest plan development shall be limited to any rivers that were not previously evaluated for eligibility, and those previously studied that now have changed circumstances that warrant a new evaluation. The ID Team shall complete a thorough and transparent evaluation of rivers to be studied for eligibility, considering best available scientific information and public input.

The rivers that are required to be studied for eligibility include all rivers named on a standard U. S. Geological Survey 7.5 minute USGS quadrangle map, but may also include rivers identified in the Nationwide Rivers Inventory and by other sources. Using GIS layers, a comparison has been made by the IDT to ensure that all named rivers flowing wholly or partially on National Forest System lands that were not included in the previous eligibility study are considered in this current study.

If any river segments that were included in the 2002 study are found to be affected by changed circumstances, those river segments will be reevaluated to determine if there is a change from the original finding. In some circumstances, rivers that were previously found to be eligible may no longer be so because of these changes; in other cases rivers that were found to be ineligible may now be eligible.

Changed circumstances are any kind of changes that have occurred to the river or the river corridor that have affected the outstandingly remarkable values. Examples of changes include the listing of a species within the river, broad recognition of the river for certain recreational opportunities, or changes that now make the river's values more unique.

Changes that indicate weaker outstandingly remarkable values may include recovery and delisting of a species, floods, or other events that have adversely affected the river's recreational opportunities, or changes that now make the values of the river more common.

2) Define the River Corridor Boundaries to include in the Eligibility Study:

When establishing preliminary boundaries of the study river, the Interdisciplinary Team should:

- a. Identify the beginning and ending points of each river segment to be studied for eligibility. Beginning points may include (but are not limited to) the source of the river, or where it forms when two small tributaries meet, or enter the National Forest. Ending points might include (but are not limited to) a confluence with a larger rivers or the National Forest boundaries. Refer to section 82.62 of the 1909.12 Forest Planning Handbook for determining beginning and ending points of river segments.
- b. Consider the entire river system, including the connections between the main river and its tributaries and their associated ecosystems which may contain outstandingly remarkable values. This consideration only pertains to Forest System lands, the Forest jurisdiction for Wild and Scenic Rivers eligibility does not extend to private property. At a minimum, a river study area includes the length of the identified river segment and the land within one-quarter mile of each river bank's ordinary high water mark along the river segment – unless there are non-Forest ownership lands within this distance. Under those circumstances, the corridor would not extend beyond National

Forest System lands boundaries. The river corridor to be studied may be wider to include National Forest System lands areas beyond the minimum to protect river-related outstandingly remarkable values, other important river resources or to make the river corridor manageable.

- c. Consider public and stakeholder input of the initial results as part of a transparent, inclusive process.

3) Identify River Segments:

To determine eligibility, and when later deciding upon river classifications, it may be necessary or appropriate to divide a study river into more than one segment. When defining segment boundaries within a single river, the ID Team should consider:

- Hydrographic and geographic features of the river, such as junctions with major tributaries, entrances or exits from major terrain types, or distinct changes in river gradient that alter the character of the river;
- Land status or ownership;
- Development on or near the river, such as the presence of dams and reservoirs, road access, buildings, and other constructed features (Segment breaks may be appropriate where development changes would result in a classification change);
- The presence of important resource values;
- Segment length: There is no required minimum length for a river segment, but it should be sufficient to enable protection of outstandingly remarkable values if the area were managed apart from other segments
- Consider public and stakeholder input of the preliminary results

4) Determine Eligibility as a Potential Wild and Scenic River:

For purposes of this process, in order to be determined as “eligible” a river segment must meet two requirements: it must be free-flowing and, including within its adjacent land area, it must also possess one or more outstandingly remarkable values.

- a. Free-flowing Condition:
The river segment must be “free-flowing,” as defined in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act as follows:
 - “Free flowing” means existing or flowing in a natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, riprapping, or other modification of the waterway;
 - The existence of low dams, diversion works, or other minor structures does not automatically bar consideration for eligibility (However, this also does not imply automatic approval for future construction of such structures in a designated National Wild and Scenic River);
 - A river segment may flow between large impoundments and still be considered “free flowing” - Such segments may qualify if conditions within the segment meet the eligibility criteria;
 - There are no requirements for minimum flows for an eligible segment. Flows are considered sufficient for eligibility if they sustain or complement the outstandingly remarkable values for which the river would be designated
- b. Outstandingly Remarkable Values
For a river to be eligible for inclusion in the National System, the river and its adjacent land area (referred to as the “river area”), must have one or more outstandingly remarkable values. Under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the categories of outstandingly remarkable values include:
 - Scenic

- Recreational
- Geologic
- Fish and wildlife
- Historic
- Cultural
- Or other similar values

To be “outstandingly remarkable”, river-related values must be a unique, rare, or exemplary feature that is significant when compared with similar values from other rivers at a regional or national scale.

Unique, rare, or exemplary features are those that are conspicuous examples, among the best representatives of these features, within a region or the nation.

While the range of resources that may be considered is broad, all features considered should be directly river-related. River values should meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Be located in the river or its corridor,
- Contribute substantially to the functioning of the river ecosystem, or
- Be river-dependent and owe their location or existence to the presence of the river.

The determination that a river area does or does not contain one or more outstandingly remarkable values is a professional decision on the part of the Forest Supervisor as informed by the Interdisciplinary Team, best available scientific information, and public participation.

As part of this determination process, input will be solicited and documented from organizations and individuals familiar with specific river resources.

Other sources of information for identifying outstandingly remarkable values include the Nationwide Rivers Inventory; State river assessments; Tribal governments, other Federal, State, or local agencies; and the public.

Regions of Comparison

The ID Team is tasked with preliminarily identifying a “region of comparison,” (ROC) for each outstandingly remarkable value. The region of comparison may vary for different rivers or categories of outstandingly remarkable values, so multiple regions of comparison may be used to evaluate one river. Regions of comparison may also be similar, or even the same across the Forest. Each region of comparison is scaled at an appropriate level for the type of river value being evaluated.

For example, for one particular river, the appropriate region of comparison for scenic values may be an entire National Forest, but for cultural values the appropriate one may be the portion of the State in which the river is located. However, the Forest Supervisor may determine that a single region of comparison can be used for the evaluation of all outstanding remarkable values.

Once the region(s) of comparison is (or are) identified, each river’s values will be analyzed in comparison with other rivers in that region. Regions of comparison should be large enough to incorporate similar rivers with a wide range of values so that outstandingly remarkable values can be recognized.

The evaluation of small rivers and streams that are similar throughout their length and watershed may be combined into the most common watershed descriptor for the area, or identified and evaluated as separate rivers when they have one or more outstandingly remarkable value.

The draft Regions of Comparison developed by the ID Team for the Gila National Forest are listed in Table 1 below. These draft Regions of Comparison are still subject to change, update, and modification due to additional information, agency internal review, and stakeholder input.

Table 1	
ORV	Region of Comparison
Scenery	<p>Gila National Forest, Adjacent National Forests (All of Apache NF, Magdalena and Mount Taylor districts of Cibola NF, and Coronado NF Safford District and lower elevations of Douglas District, and Including NM “Bootheel Region”</p> <p><i>Rationale/Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Shared watersheds and basins – Similar rivers and landscapes between Forests – The Rio Grande as the eastern boundary
Recreation	<p>Gila National Forest and Magdalena District of Cibola National Forest</p> <p><i>Rationale/Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Similar visitation numbers and demographics to the Cibola NF district – Gila is a unique setting for the southwest, due to water availability – Unique opportunities include river floating, fishing, and canyoneering
Geology	<p>Gila National Forest and part of the Apache National Forest.</p> <p><i>Rationale/Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – With the exception of a small area in the Burro Mountains, all of the Gila NF is underlain by volcanic rocks of the Mogollon-Datil Volcanic field.
Fish	<p>Watershed 4th code (where headwaters originate) Forest-wide; Entirety of Gila/San Francisco Rivers in AZ and NM</p> <p><i>Rationale/Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Consider both populations of fish and habitat availability – Basins contain endemic species – Not whole Rio Grande basin so somewhere this will be split – Individual populations and assemblages can be important
Wildlife	<p>Arizona and New Mexico</p> <p><i>Rationale/Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Species range of federally listed and species of conservation concern are comparable across the region
Historic and Cultural Values	<p>Gila National Forest</p> <p><i>Rationale/Notes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Captures the primary cultural groups in the area – Northern boundary of Gila NF is a break/transition to another cultural group

Table 1	
Other Similar River-related values	By Their Nature Unique Individually; Determined at the Time of ORV Identification

Criteria to be used for Establishing Outstandingly Remarkable Values:

Section 1(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act establishes categories of outstandingly remarkable values. For each of these categories, criteria are identified to establish a baseline that fosters greater consistency within the Agency and with other Federal river-administering agencies in evaluating eligibility. These set minimum thresholds to establish outstandingly remarkable values. Criteria within the category may be modified and additional criteria may be included to make them more meaningful in the region of comparison. Additional criteria are not used to create any subcategories within the value categories established in the Act.

Table 2 below shows the Chapter 80 and Gila NF specific criteria to be used to establish outstandingly remarkable values.

Table 2: Chapter 80 criteria with supplemental Gila NF-specific criteria

Table 2: Chapter 80 and Gila Specific ORV Criteria		
ORV	Chapter 80 Criteria	Additional Gila NF Specific criteria
Scenery	Landscape elements of landform, vegetation, water, color, and related factors result in notable or exemplary visual features or attractions. Additional factors, such as seasonal variations in vegetation, scale of cultural modifications, and the length of time negative intrusions are viewed, may be considered. Scenery and visual attractions may be highly diverse over different parts of the river or river segment. Outstandingly remarkable scenic features may occupy only a small portion of a river corridor.	Vast, expansive viewsheds are possible in certain stretches within the river corridor. Air quality and natural night sky are important values.
Recreation	Recreational opportunities are high quality and attract, or have the potential to attract, visitors from throughout or beyond the region of comparison; or the recreational opportunities are unique or rare within the region. River-related recreational opportunities include, but are not limited to, sightseeing, interpretation, wildlife observation, camping, photography, hiking, fishing, hunting, and boating. The river may	Solitude is an important value. Canyoneering, rockclimbing, rappelling, hot spring soaking, recreational driving/ecotourism, recreational mining (gold panning) are additional opportunities. Birdwatching is a key part of wildlife observations with a large number of species occurring on the Forest. Fishing for endemic species

Table 2: Chapter 80 and Gila Specific ORV Criteria

ORV	Chapter 80 Criteria	Additional Gila NF Specific criteria
	provide settings for national or regional use or competitive events.	such as Gila Trout is a unique experience.
Geology	The river corridor contains one or more examples of a geologic feature, process, or phenomenon that is unique, rare or exemplary within the region of comparison. The feature(s) may be in an unusually active stage of development, represent a “textbook” example, or represent a unique, rare or exemplary combination of geologic features (erosional, volcanic, glacial, or other geologic structures).	
Fish	<p>Fish values may be judged on the relative merits of either fish populations or habitat, or a combination of these river-related conditions.</p> <p>a. Populations. The river is nationally or regionally an important producer of resident and/or anadromous fish species. Of particular significance are a diversity of fish species or the presence of wild stocks and/or Federal or State-listed or candidate threatened, endangered, or species of conservation concern.</p> <p>b. Habitat. The river provides uniquely diverse or high quality habitat for fish species indigenous to the region of comparison. Of particular significance is exemplary habitat for wild stocks and/or Federal or State-listed or candidate threatened or endangered species, or species of conservation concern. Consider also rare and unique habitats within the corridor.</p>	Special emphasis on irreplaceable populations and on biodiversity for multiple threatened and endangered species.
Wildlife	<p>Wildlife values may be judged on the relative merits of either terrestrial or aquatic wildlife populations or habitat, or a combination of these conditions.</p> <p>a. Populations. The river, or area within the river corridor, contains nationally or regionally important populations of indigenous wildlife species. Of particular significance are species diversity, species considered to be unique, and/or</p>	Special emphasis on irreplaceable populations and on biodiversity for multiple threatened and endangered species.

Table 2: Chapter 80 and Gila Specific ORV Criteria

ORV	Chapter 80 Criteria	Additional Gila NF Specific criteria
	<p>populations of Federal or State-listed or candidate threatened or endangered species, or species of conservation concern.</p> <p>b. Habitat. The river, or area within the river corridor, provides uniquely diverse or high quality habitat for wildlife of national or regional significance, and/or may provide unique habitat or a critical link in habitat conditions for Federal or State-listed or candidate threatened or endangered species, or species of conservation concern. Contiguous habitat conditions are such that the biological needs of the species are met.</p>	
Historic and Cultural Values	<p>The river, or area within the river corridor, contains important evidence of historic or pre-historic occupation or use by humans. Sites may have national or regional importance for interpreting history or prehistory.</p> <p>a. History. Sites or features are associated with a significant event, an important person, or a cultural activity of the past that is now rare or unique in the region. A historic site or feature, in most cases, is 50 years old or older.</p> <p>b. Prehistory. Sites of prehistoric human use or occupation may have unique or rare characteristics or exemplary anthropological value such as evidence of prehistoric human practices and modes of living. Areas within the river corridor may have been used for rare sacred purposes, or represent the origin or conflict of cultures.</p>	<p>The standard requires that typical visitors would generally find their visit enhanced significantly by the presence of these resources (e.g., through seeing rock art, cliff dwellings, or other readily apparent sites). Interpretive value does not require interpretation but indicates the area and river corridor's significance beyond the normal "background" level of cultural resources in the analysis area.</p>
Other Similar River-related values	N/A	

5) Assign a Preliminary Classification to Each Identified Eligible River Segment

The preliminary classification of a river found to be eligible is based on the condition of the river and the development level of adjacent lands as they exist at the time of the study. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act specifies and defines three classification categories for eligible rivers:

- Wild rivers
- Scenic rivers
- Recreational rivers

Eligible rivers may be divided into segments with different classifications when the levels of human use and activity create different degrees of development. When a river has one or more classifications, each river segment should be of sufficient size for its unique management needs.

To determine which preliminary classification category to assign to a river segment, the ID Team will use the Table 1 from the Planning Handbook Chapter 80, also found on page 12 of this document. A final classification will be assigned if the river is designated by Congress.

6) Documentation of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Eligibility Process

Stakeholders will have an opportunity to provide feedback on this draft process paper with an emphasis on the draft criteria for outstandingly remarkable values and the regions of comparison. Stakeholders will also be invited to provide input on rivers that may have outstandingly remarkable values and/or changed circumstances using an interactive webmap ([link](#)). The interdisciplinary team will complete a thorough and transparent evaluation of rivers to be studied for eligibility, considering best available information, and District and stakeholder input.

A finding will be provided by the Forest Supervisor for each river segment studied as to whether or not the river is eligible. The ID Team will document a finding of eligibility or ineligibility and its preliminary classification for each river segment in an appendix to the draft environmental impact statement for the revised Forest Plan, which will be available for stakeholder review and feedback. The findings will later be summarized in the plan decision document.

The revised Forest Plan will have interim protection measures for all identified eligible river corridor(s) until a congressional decision is made on the future use of the river and adjacent lands, or unless a suitability study concludes that the river is not suitable.

If the study of a river results in a finding of ineligibility by the Forest Supervisor during the land management planning process, or during a separate wild and scenic river study, the study of that river is complete.

The environmental analysis document for the revised plan will contain an appendix containing the study report for all rivers. This section will contain separate river narratives for each river segment evaluated in the planning process and a map showing the rivers, their boundaries and corridors. River segments may be organized or grouped by watershed to address rationale for determination of eligibility. The river narratives are a synopsis of the relevant information related to eligibility and classification.

The documentation shall include:

- A series of tables and narratives that provide the basis for making the determination of eligibility;
- One or more tables listing each river segment with information supporting whether the river is deemed eligible or not (such as free-flowing characteristics, and presence or absence of, along with a description, of outstandingly remarkable values);
- One or more maps showing all rivers studied for eligibility that identifies:
 - Eligible segments;
 - Proposed classification of eligible segments; and
 - Locations of corridors, boundaries, and termini of eligible segments

Next Steps in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Process (Outside of Plan Revision)

Suitability Study:

It is not a requirement of the 2012 Planning Rule that Forests must also conduct suitability studies, only eligibility studies are mandated during the Forest Plan Revision. However, if the Forest Supervisor should decide to conduct a suitability study of any eligible rivers, or should the Gila NF receive congressional direction to do so, a separate document will detail the process for that undertaking by an ID Team.

A suitability study provides the basis for determining which eligible rivers or river segments should be recommended to Congress as potential additions to the National System. The content of a suitability study is described in section 83.3 of the Forest Service Handbook. A suitability study will address these questions:

- Should the river's free-flowing character, water quality, and outstandingly remarkable values be protected, or are one or more other uses important enough to warrant doing otherwise?
- Will the river's free-flowing character, water quality, and outstandingly remarkable values be protected through designation?
- Will the benefits of designation exceed the benefits of non-designation?
- Is designation the best method for protecting the river corridor?
- Is there a demonstrated commitment to protect the river by any non-Federal entities that may be partially responsible for implementing protective management?

Any eligible river may be studied for its suitability for inclusion in the National System at any time. Rivers may be studied for suitability as part of a plan development or revision, as part of a plan amendment, in conjunction with a project decision, or in a separate study. The Forest may also receive congressional direction to undertake a Wild and Scenic Rivers Suitability Study at any time.

Designation or Return to Other Forest Uses by Congress through Legislation:

Rivers on Forest Service lands are designated as part of the National System as specified in section 2(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act through an act of Congress. However, Congress may disagree with the recommendations of the suitability study, and instead direct the river corridor be opened to other uses.

Definitions:

Classification. Identification of the class (wild, scenic, or recreational) that appropriately describes an eligible river or river segment, based on the criteria established in section 2(b) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Determination. A finding in a study report that a river segment does, or does not, meet the criteria found in this chapter to be eligible; or a finding that an eligible river is or is not suitable for inclusion in the National System.

Eligible River. A river segment that has been evaluated, and found to be free-flowing and, in combination with its adjacent land area, possesses one or more outstandingly remarkable values.

Forest Service-identified Study Rivers. Rivers that the Forest Service has identified for study to determine potential inclusion in the National System, as directed under section 5(d)(1) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. These include the inventory of rivers being studied for eligibility, eligible rivers being studied for suitability, and rivers that have been determined to be suitable but are not yet designated.

Legislatively Mandated Study Rivers. Rivers that Congress has identified under section 5(a) of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act for study to determine their suitability for inclusion in the National System. Legislatively mandated study rivers are considered eligible rivers unless a study determines the river to be ineligible (sec. 83.1). A river determined to be not suitable is no longer considered to be eligible.

Outstandingly Remarkable Value. A scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar river-related value that is unique, rare, or exemplary feature and is significant when compared with similar values from other rivers at a regional or national scale.

Region of Comparison. The geographic area of consideration for each outstandingly remarkable value that will serve as the basis for meaningful comparative analysis.

River. A flowing body of water or estuary, or a section, portion, or tributary thereof, including rivers, streams, creeks, runs, kills, rills, and small lakes.

River Corridor. The geographic area generally encompassed within one-quarter mile on either side of a river studied for eligibility or suitability that contains the river and its outstandingly remarkable values.

River Segment. A distinct section of a river; in the context of wild and scenic river planning, refers to a distinct portion of a river that has a beginning, an endpoint, and specific classification. A river may be one segment with a classification or have multiple segments, each with a different classification.

Study Process. The generic term applied to both the process of inventorying rivers to determine if they are eligible for inclusion in the National System or evaluating eligible rivers to determine if they are suitable for inclusion in the National System.

Study Report. The documentation for the inventory and evaluation of wild and scenic river eligibility or suitability.

Study River. See “Forest Service-identified Study River” or “Legislatively-mandated Study River.”

Suitable River. A river segment that a Federal agency has studied and determined to be suitable for inclusion in the National System, but has not been statutorily designated. A river found suitable for inclusion in the National System is a river that the Forest Service will recommend or has recommended for inclusion in the System.

1909.12 Chapter 80 Table 1 – Classification Criteria for Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers

ATTRIBUTE	WILD	SCENIC	RECREATIONAL
Water Resource Development	Free of impoundment.	Free of impoundment.	Some existing impoundment or diversion. The existence of low dams, diversions, or other modifications of the waterway is acceptable, provided the waterway remains generally natural and riverine in appearance.
Shoreline Development	Essentially primitive. Little or no evidence of human activity. The presence of a few inconspicuous structures, particularly those of historic or cultural value, is acceptable. A limited amount of domestic livestock grazing or hay production is acceptable. Little or no evidence of past timber harvest. No ongoing timber harvest.	Largely primitive and undeveloped. No substantial evidence of human activity. The presence of small communities or dispersed dwellings or farm structures is acceptable. The presence of grazing, hay production, or row crops is acceptable. Evidence of past or ongoing timber harvest is acceptable, provided the forest appears natural from the riverbank.	Some development. Substantial evidence of human activity. The presence of extensive residential development and a few commercial structures is acceptable. Lands may have been developed for the full range of agricultural and forestry uses. May show evidence of past and ongoing timber harvest.
Accessibility	Generally inaccessible except by trail. No roads, railroads, or other provision for vehicular travel within the river area. A few existing roads leading to the boundary of the area are acceptable.	Accessible in places by road. Roads may occasionally reach or bridge the river. The existence of short stretches of conspicuous or longer stretches of inconspicuous roads or railroads is acceptable.	Readily accessible by road or railroad. The existence of parallel roads or railroads on one or both banks as well as bridge crossings and other river access points is acceptable.
Water Quality	Meets, or exceeds criteria, or federally approved State standards for aesthetics, for propagation of fish, and wildlife normally adapted to the habitat of the river, and for primary contact recreation (swimming) except where exceeded by natural conditions.	No criteria are prescribed by the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972 have made it a national goal that all waters of the United States are made fishable and swimmable. Therefore, rivers will not be precluded from scenic or recreational classification because of poor water quality at the time of their study, provided a water quality improvement plan exists, or is being developed in compliance with applicable Federal and State laws.	

References:

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